

CLAIMS

1. A method of operating a base station system comprising at least one base station controller (BSC); the method comprising controlling receipt of data from a streaming
5 source; wherein the data from the streaming source is stored in a buffer in the BSC when a mobile station (MS) is communicating via a first cell; and transmitted to the MS from the BSC buffer at a first data rate via the first cell; wherein the BSC monitors the MS and on receipt of an indication that the MS has ceased communication via the first cell, the BSC prevents further streaming data from entering the BSC buffer; wherein
10 the BSC monitors for an indication that the MS has set up communication via a second cell; and on receipt of such an indication, instructs the streaming source to continue data transfer via the second cell; wherein a BSC in the second cell instructs the streaming source to increase the rate of data transfer to the MS buffer via the second cell until the MS buffer is substantially refilled; and thereafter to continue data transfer
15 at the first data rate.
2. A method according to claim 1, wherein the streaming data is stored in a store in a serving GPRS support node (SGSN) before being transmitted to the BSC buffer.
- 20 3. A method according to claim 2, wherein the SGSN measures a service interruption time and determines the required increased rate of data transfer and the period for which that data transfer rate shall be maintained therefrom.
4. A method according to claim 1, wherein the increased data rate is set between
25 an original guaranteed bit rate and a peak rate.
5. A method according to claim 1, wherein the rate of data transfer is increased by changing the guaranteed bit rate.
- 30 6. A method according to claim 1, wherein the streaming source comprises real-audio streaming from the Internet, or video.

7. A handover method in a general packet radio service (GPRS) system, the method comprising receiving data from a streaming source in a serving GPRS support node (SGSN), transmitting data to a mobile station (MS) at a first data rate via a first cell; storing the data in a buffer in the MS; and running an application on the MS from
5 the buffer; on receipt of an indication that the MS has ceased communication via the first cell; instructing the SGSN to store data in its buffer; monitoring for an indication that the MS has set up communication via a second cell; and continuing data transfer via the second cell; wherein the rate of data transfer from the SGSN to the MS buffer via the second cell is increased until the MS buffer is substantially refilled; and
10 thereafter continuing data transfer at the first data rate.
8. A method according to claim 7, wherein the SGSN measures a service interruption time and determines the required increased rate of data transfer therefrom.
- 15 9. A method according to claim 8, wherein the increased data rate is set between an original guaranteed bit rate and a peak rate.
10. A method according to claim 9, wherein the rate of data transfer is increased by changing the guaranteed bit rate.
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11. A method according to claim 7, wherein data transfer from the SGSN to the MS is controlled by a base station controller.
12. A method according to claim 7, wherein the streaming source comprises real-
25 audio streaming from the Internet, or video.